

Message Text

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ORIGIN EB-07

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CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 FRB-03 H-02 INR-07 INT-05

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STR-04 TAR-01 TRSE-00 PRS-01 SP-02 FEAE-00 OMB-01

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DRAFTED BY EB/OT/GCP:CBLACK:JV

APPROVED BY EB:JLKATZ

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ARA:AFISHLOW (IN SUBSTANCE)

USDA/FAS:JBENSON

EB/OT:CSCHMIDT

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ARA/ECP:SROGERS

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TAGS: ETRD, EAGR, GATT, JM

SUBJECT: JAMAICAN RICE IMPORT QUOTA

REF: STATE 299454

FOR AMBASSADOR

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1. IN DECEMBER 17 MEETING WITH DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY GLITMAN, REPORTED REFTEL, JAMAICAN AMBASSADOR RATTRAY, SAID THAT HE WOULD CONVEY TO GOJ U.S. OBJECTIONS TO JAMAICAN IMPORT RESTRICTIONS ON U.S. RICE AND PROMISED A RESPONSE. WE HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED THAT RESPONSE. IMMENCE OF GOJ DECISION ON 1976 RICE IMPORTS REQUIRES THAT FURTHER REPRESENTATION BE MADE PROMPTLY.

2. AMBASSADOR RATTRAY IN HIS MEETING WITH GLITMAN COUNTERED US OBJECTIONS BY CLAIMING THAT UNDER ITS CARICOM COMMITMENTS JAMAICA IS REQUIRED TO LOOK TO MEMBER COUNTRIES FIRST IN FULFILLING ITS IMPORT NEEDS, E.G., IN THIS CASE TO GUYANA FOR RICE. ALTHOUGH RESEARCH OF CARICOM TREATY INDICATES THAT RICE WAS NOT SPECIFICALLY INCLUDED IN THE AGRICULTURAL MARKETING PROTOCOL ORIGINALLY INSTITUTED UNDER CARIFTA AND ESTABLISHED UNDER ARTICLE 48 OF THE CARICOM TREATY, RICE TRADE COULD BE COVERED BY

OBJECTIVE 2(D) OF ARTICLE 49 OF THE CARICOM TREATY DEALING WITH NATIONALIZATION OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION WITHIN THE COMMON MARKET WHICH CALLS FOR REPLACEMENT OF AGRICULTURAL IMPORTS ON A REGIONAL BASIS. FURTHERMORE, RICE TRADE IN THE CARICOM AREA CONTINUES TO BE GOVERNED, BY THREE SEPARATE RICE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN GUYANA AND (1) JAMAICA, (2) TRINIDAD, AND (3) LEEWARD AND WINDWARD ISLANDS AND BARBADOS. U.S. HAS BEEN RESIDUAL SUPPLIER TO JAMAICA AND OUR EXPORTERS HAVE FREQUENTLY COMPLAINED IN THE PAST ABOUT THEIR PERIODIC EXCLUSION FROM THE MARKET. MOST SERIOUS COMPLAINTS HAVE COME FROM EXPORTER OF PROCESSED U.S. RICE.

3. IN 1971 GATT WORKING PARTY REVIEWED CARIFTA AGREEMENT INCLUDING AGRICULTURAL MARKETING PROTOCOLS. U.S. OBJECTED TO THEM AND CARIFTA REPRESENTATIVE STATED ITS MEMBERS WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONSULT WITH ANY CONTRACTING PARTY WHO FELT CARIFTA ARRANGEMENTS WERE CAUSING INJURY TO THEIR EXPORTS. U.S. CAN, THEREFORE, PURSUE RICE IMPORT LICENSE MATTER IN THE GATT. HOWEVER, THE OUTCOME OF SUCH AN ACTION IS UNCERTAIN AT BEST. WE WOULD PREFER TO ACHIEVE A SOLUTION WHICH WOULD BE RESPONSIVE TO THE COMPLAINTS OF THE U.S. RICE GROWERS AND THEREBY AVOID LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SECTION 301 ACTION WHICH EVENTUALLY COULD INVOLVE RETALIATION BY U.S. OUTSIDE GATT.

4. SENATOR LONG HAS AGAIN WRITTEN TO UNDER-SECRETARY ROBINSON ON JAMAICA RICE QUESTION REQUESTING DEPARTMENT OBTAIN FOR HIM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE A WRITTEN ANSWER FROM GOJ AS TO WHETHER OR NOT IMPORT LICENSES WILL BE GRANTED TO U.S. RICE IMPORTERS IN JAMAICA DURING 1976

AND, IF NOT, LONG EXPECTED THE DEPARTMENT TO OBTAIN A WRITTEN EXPLANATION FROM THE GOJ. WE UNDERSTAND FROM ONE OF THE LAWYERS THAT THE WRITTEN ANSWER PROVIDED BY THE GOJ, IF IT IS NEGATIVE, WOULD BE USED AS THE BASIS FOR COMPLAINT TO STR UNDER SECTION 301 OF THE TRADE ACT. ALTHOUGH YOU MAY INFORM GOJ OF LONG'S INTEREST, AWAIT FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING ANY FORMAL WRITTEN EXCHANGES.

5. LICENSING OF U.S. RICE FOR IMPORT WOULD DEFUSE THE ISSUE. WE NOW SEE NO CHANCE OF AVOIDING 301 COMPLAINT UNLESS GOJ AGREES QUICKLY TO ALLOW IMPORTS CONSISTENT WITH THE HISTORIC MARKET SHARE ENJOYED BY U.S. RICE.

6. THEREFORE, REQUEST THAT YOU DISCUSS URGENTLY THE JAMAICAN RICE IMPORT QUOTA PROBLEM WITH JAMAICAN PRIME MINISTER MANLEY OR OTHER HIGH LEVEL JAMAICAN OFFICIAL WITH A VIEW TO REACHING A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION IN ORDER TO AVOID FILING OF A COMPLAINT BY U.S. RICE EXPORTERS UNDER SECTION 301 OF THE TRADE ACT AND THE NECESSITY OF THE U.S. PURSUING THE ISSUE IN THE GATT. REPORT RESULTS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. KISSINGER

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